

Saints Peter & Paul St. Mary's (Dormition of the Mother of God)
 Byzantine Catholic Church Byzantine Catholic Church
 107 South Fourth Street 131 South Morris Street
 Minersville, PA 17954 Saint Clair, PA 17970

Parish Office: (570) 544-2074

Website: www.sspeterandpaulminersville.com

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Served by: Very Reverend Gregory J. Noga, Pastor

SS. Peter & Paul Cantor: Mr. Paul Konkus St. Mary Cantor: Dr. Peter Yasenchak

CONFESSIONS: SS. Peter & Paul: Saturday 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. prior to
 Divine Liturgy and Daily prior to Divine Liturgy

St. Mary's: Saturday 3:00 PM

SICK CALLS: As scheduled, or anytime in case of an emergency. If anyone is homebound or
 hospitalized, please call the rectory (544-2074)

Bulletins are sponsored by
Mahal-Ritzel Funeral Home
 Minersville, PA 544-5111
 Mark J. Mahal – Funeral Director

Commentary on Riches

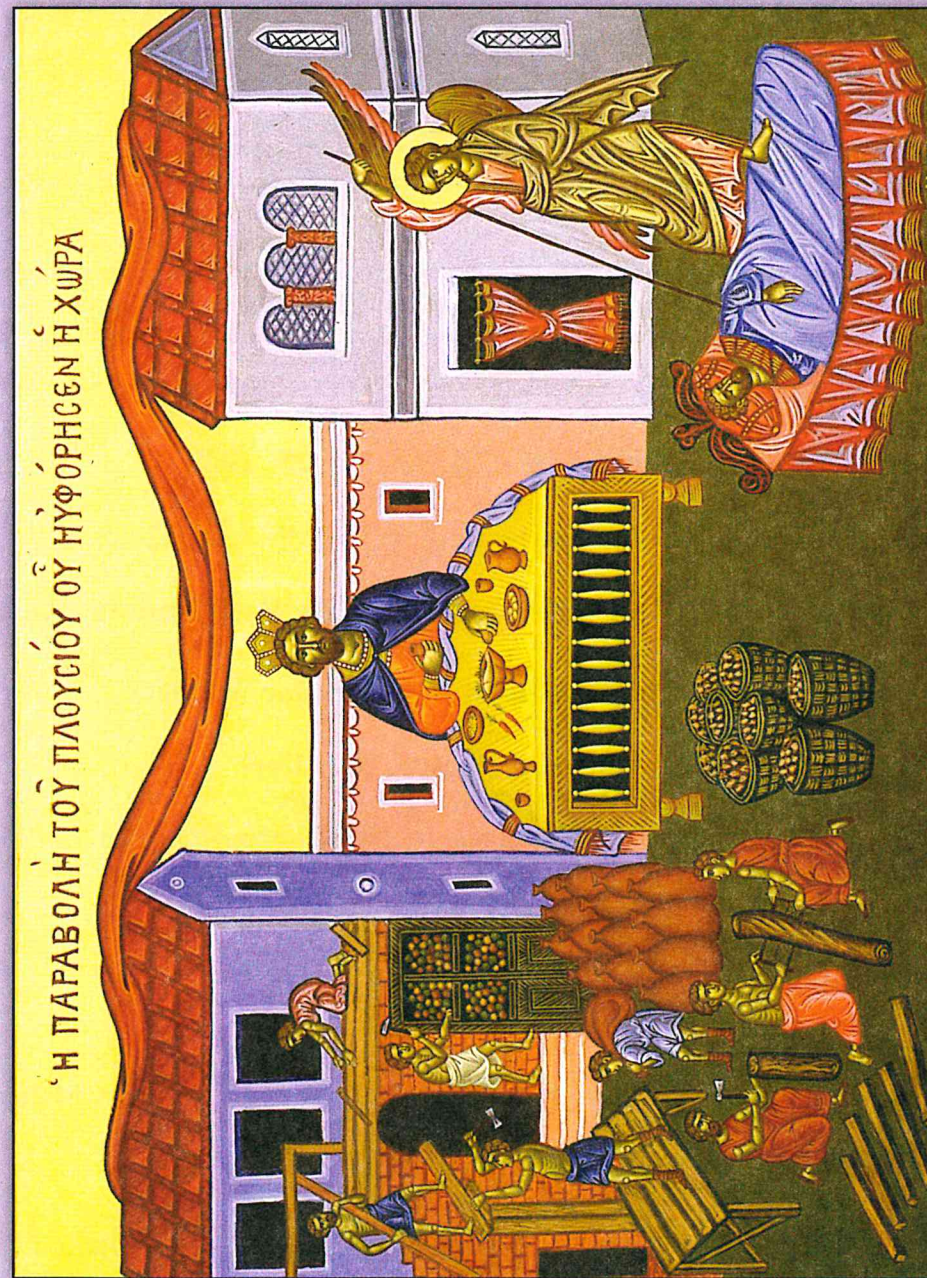
The land of a rich man produced abundant harvests, and he thought to himself, "What am I to do? I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones." Now why did that land bear so well, when it belonged to a man who would make no good use of its fertility? It was to show more clearly the forbearance of God, whose kindness extends even to such people as this. He sends rain on both the just and the unjust, and makes the sun rise on the wicked and good alike. But what do we find in this man? A bitter disposition, hatred of other people, unwillingness to give. This is the return he made to his Benefactor. He forgot that we all share the same nature; he felt no obligation to distribute his surplus to the needy. His barns were full to bursting point, but still his miserly heart was not satisfied. Year by year he increased his wealth, always adding new crops to the old. The result was a hopeless impasse: greed would not permit him to

part with anything he possessed, and yet because he had so much there was no place to store his latest harvest. And so he was incapable of making a decision and could find no escape from his anxiety. What am I to do?

You who have wealth, recognize who has given you the gifts you have received. Consider yourself, who you are, what has been committed to your charge, from whom you have received it, why you have been preferred to most other people. You are the servant of the good God, a steward on behalf of your fellow servants. Do not imagine that everything has been provided for your own stomach. Make decisions regarding your property as though it belonged to another. Possessions give you pleasure for a short time, but then they will slip through your fingers and be gone, and you will be required to give an exact account of them.

St. Basil the Great

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



Icon of the Parable of the Rich Fool

**25th Sunday after Pentecost
Tone 8**

Welcome to the parish communities of SS. Peter and Paul and St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Churches of Minersville and Saint Clare, Pennsylvania. We greet and welcome you to our Church. Our Church is a holy place. Our Church is where we get together in Jesus' Name. It is holy because we come here to worship, to be nourished in faith through Sacred Scripture and preaching, to open our hearts and minds to celebrate the mystery of salvation in Jesus Christ and to dedicate ourselves to a life of holiness and service to the Lord and others. The church building itself reflects this faith and calls us to enter into communion with God. We invite you to share our faith in Jesus Christ, to experience our worship and to live a life dedicated to the service of God and one another in Jesus' Name.

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November 19 – November 25, 2023

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

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| Saturday | 4:00 p.m. | + Pauline Kostura req. by MM Joseph Rada |
| Sunday | 9:00 a.m. | Health & Blessings of the Parishioners (livestreamed) |
| Monday | 9:00 a.m. | + Michael Kovich req. by Marie Wanchick |
| Entrance of the Theotokos (Solemn Holy Day) | | |
| Tuesday | 9:00 a.m. | H&B Parishioners at St. Mary |
| | 6:00 p.m. | + John Lohin req. by Elaine Lohin Kunze (at SS Peter & Paul) |
| Wednesday | 6:00 p.m. | Thanksgiving Divine Liturgy |
| Thursday | 9:00 a.m. | No Divine Liturgy Today |
| Friday | 9:00 a.m. | No Divine Liturgy Today |

Vigil of Sunday (at St. Mary)

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| Saturday | 4:00 p.m. | + Charles Kostura, Sr. req. by Kathryn Mary Malusky |
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Epistle Readers: 11/4 – Jennifer Keer; 11/12 – Beverly Kostishak; 11/19 – Ellen Sinkovich; 11/21 – Marie Wanchick; 11/26 – Anna Keer; 12/3 – Judy Kostura.

Candle Offering: The Candles in front of the Icon of the Mother of God; in front of the Icon of Christ; on the Sacramental Table are offered for Peace in the World.

Breakfast with Father:

Sunday, December 10, 2023 following the Divine Liturgy. All are welcome to attend.

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Eastern Christian Formation Class: Following the Divine Liturgy.

Filipovka

Prepare Spiritually for Christmas:

Office of Religious Education (Eparchy of Parma)

It's easy to get caught up in the preparation for Christmas. Everything around us will speak of Christmas; it just cannot be avoided. The Christmas spirit is very catchy. In fact, it is easy to mistake the preparation as the celebration itself. Or for many, December 25 ends the Christmas celebration. How sad this is - to lose the true meaning of Christmas.

There is, however, a spiritual preparation that can help us put the true meaning back into Christmas.

On November 15 we begin the Christmas Lent, popularly known as Advent (Coming) and traditionally known as the Philip Fast (since November 15 is the day after the Feast of St. Philip the Apostle). It is during this time that we pray and meditate on the spiritual meaning of Christmas.

The following prayer service is designed to guide you week by week to a deeper understanding of this Great Mystery of God becoming Man.

We recommend that you take the service each week at a convenient time, when the whole family can participate, using the suggested readings for each week.

Center your family service around your family Icon Corner (family altar) or around the kitchen or dining room table, and include the Star of David. The Star of David, a six-pointed star, symbolizes for us the Star of Bethlehem that points to Christ the Light of the World.

Each point of the Star has a candle on it, symbolizing the six weeks of the Christmas Lent. Each week a new candle is lit. This guides us through Lent, from darkness into the Light of Christmas. By Christmas Eve all six candles on the Star of David will be lit.

Do not let the secular preparation of Christmas distract you from a spiritual preparation. Knowing that Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ can make everything more meaningful. Best wishes for a meaningful and useful Christmas Lent.

Immortal Deeds

What this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her
Mark 14: 9.

Which of your accomplishments in life do you think will be most remembered and valued by others after you?

Sculptor Frank Eliscu might have guessed that his signature work would be the Cascade of Books outside the Library of Congress or the Presidential Eagle in the White House. But the most coveted piece of his art is a small statue that can be held in one hand – the Heisman Trophy – awarded annually to the most outstanding college football player in the United States.

The trophy was Eliscu's first commission, completed when he was only twenty two years of age. "It was not one of my best works of art," he said, but it turned out to be like the Statue of Liberty: not beautiful, but dear to the hearts of people."

No doubt Mary of Bethany never guessed she would be remembered for an action initially criticized as wasteful and inappropriate. After she poured a jar of very expensive perfume on Jesus, the Lord silenced the outcry against her by saying, "Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her" Mark 14:9.

Our truly immortal deeds will be like hers – simple acts of love for the Lord Jesus Christ – accepted and commended by him. We often make the mistake of thinking those positions we occupy in the world which bring us great renown or notoriety are the ones for which we will gain the notice of our God. Many times it is precisely these which drag us down into the depths of degradation and alienation from God.

*No service in itself is small,
none great, though earth it fill;
but that is small which seeks its own,
and great that does God's will.*

A life lived for God leaves a lasting legacy.

He Waited Too Long

And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with man, for he is flesh; yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years
Genesis 6: 3.

When the Holy Spirit invites and calls someone, it is very dangerous to neglect, ignore or disregard it. The Holy Spirit will finally cease to call if his invitation is not heeded and the heart is hardened.

A young man heard the Holy Spirit call him, but he pushed it off. He thought to himself that he wanted to have a good time in the world first and live for himself until he was somewhat older. He was young and had many years to spend with God. Then he would make the change, accept Christ as his Saviour and live for him. But this young man never lived to be thirty years old. When he was twenty nine- years, eleven months and some twenty five days old, our heavenly Father called him from this earth. It is questionable he would ever have repented after living so long simply for himself. No doubt our heavenly Father saw he would not repent so he was mercifully taken before he sinned and degraded himself even worse. He used God's time as his own.

Augustine in the West was inclined to pursue the truth of Christ but wanted to wait and prayed the Lord grant him repentance, but not yet. Finally, before it was too late, he submitted to the grace of his praying mother, Monica and entered the rich life of the Church. Similarly, we have the example of St. Seraphim of Sarov who as a young man pursued the invitation and grace of redemption offered by the Holy Spirit and rose in adulthood as an example for all to follow Christ.

Never make plans to serve self and the world even for a season and then at a certain age to begin serving God which is the purpose of our life. Our Christian vocation is all inclusive. Tomorrow is not promised to anyone and that age or time may never come. "God is not mocked; for what a man sows, he shall also reap" Galatians 6: 7. The temptations of youth are myriad, but we can thank our heavenly Father He will help us resist any and all temptations.

Young people, immature people, take warning. If you have rejected the invitation of the call of the Holy Spirit, repent now and fulfill your baptismal vows by repenting, confessing your shortcoming sins and give your heart and soul entirely to our Lord. Time is short and running out. It is about the twelfth hour for so many of us. "Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts" Hebrews 3: 15. The time to respond is when He calls.

The Incredible Truth

In him we live and move and have our being
Acts of the Apostles 17: 28.

Our heavenly Father seeks himself in us and the aridity and sorrow of our heart is the sorrow of God who is not known in us, who cannot find himself in us because we do not dare to believe or trust the incredible truth that He can live in us and live there out of choice, out of preference simply because of our incredible desire for his presence. Indeed, we exist and live solely for this, to be the place He has chosen for his presence, his manifestation in the world, his always ready epiphany. But we cannot seem to gather together enough faith response that would attract the attention of the Holy Spirit to raise our level of worthiness and render us the abiding place of our Creator God! We do not become excited enough to be the chosen throne of the God of the universe!

We meek all this dark and inglorious, even seemingly sinister because we fail to accept it, to believe it; we refuse in fact to believe and live it. It is not that we hate God, rather that we hate ourselves, despair of ourselves. If we once began to recognize, humbly but truly the real value of our own self, we would see that this value was the sign of our God in our being, the signature of God upon our body and soul.

Perhaps we still do not understand truly that our God created us out of love, that He does in fact love us intimately and dearly, can be present in us, can live in us, can dwell in us, actually daily invites us, continually saves us and offers an understanding and light which are like nothing ever found in books or heard in sermons.

His revelation in Scripture and in the liturgical life of the Church offer again and again a witness to this endearing love and truth. We ought never stop praying to come to an abiding belief in the incredible truth that He chooses to abide in us, his choicest creation. May we never stop asking him to shatter our doubts about his intentions and purpose. May we become as focused and zealous in response to his first shown love as He is in making it plainly manifest to us. Lord, burn from my soul all bitterness that the sweetness of your engaging love is made plain for me.

Praising God

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually. That is, the fruits of our lips giving thanks to his name
Hebrews 13 15.

Christians seem to use petition more than praise in their prayers. Yet St. Paul says we should praise God "continually." The Spirit was sent into our hearts that we might glorify Jesus. Praising and glorifying opens us to God.

We have been taught and we take seriously to give respect to family and friends. How much more is it important to render respect to our Creator God! When we praise and honor God, then He will honor us, "for those who honor me I honor in my turn...." 1 Samuel 2: 30.

We must learn that it is especially important to praise God when we have doubts and temptations, when we are not in the proper mood to praise. Praise him when things go right and when things go wrong. In little things, like a friend's rebuke and in big things like having a spouse with terminal cancer. We can praise our God when we are driving, we can sing his praises when we are alone, walking or jogging. We can praise him as we prepare for bed and as we awaken. We can praise him "continually," because if we awaken during the night his glory can be formed on our lips.

First and foremost, we can join believers in praising our God at the public services of the Church each Sunday and holyday. We are afforded an opportunity to sing and pray his praises with glorification in song and word. We can learn from the saints experience for ourselves that singing the praise of the Holy Trinity is doubly praying.

As we establish the pattern of praise and glorification of our God daily, we can expect him to abundantly bless us for our sincere efforts for He has promised to honor "in my turn." Ours should be the soul-set, mind-set of praising and glorifying our God without ceasing. May there be true substance to our prayer life not simply empty form.